

CHAPTER FOUR: MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Although Biscayne National Park is primarily a natural area, the Honeywell complex on Boca Chita Key represents a significant historic resource within park boundaries. This complex should be maintained and interpreted to illustrate the history of the site. Retention of the historic structures on Boca Chita can be accomplished without negatively impacting the park's legislated purpose and can support recreational use of the Park by visitors.

The historic Honeywell complex on Boca Chita Key should be preserved, with the lighthouse, picnic pavilion, chapel, garage, engine house, bridge, canal, cannon, stone wall, retaining walls, and concrete walkways maintained as contributing structures within the historic district. The lighthouse and the bridge should be repaired and opened to the public. Consideration should also be given to re-opening the canal beneath the bridge to restore the historic appearance and function of these structures. The stone retaining walls should be retained and allowed to weather naturally.

Any proposed development on the key should take into account the size and scale of the historic structures and the overall plan of the complex. Compatible small-scale development would be acceptable within the large open area in the vicinity of the old main house site, the area between the engine house and the garage, and in the natural section to the south. Development of the historic core of the complex, roughly delineated by the stone wall on the south, the main house site on the east and the shoreline on the north and west, should be avoided.

The main house site was central to the original plan for the complex. Its location may be considered for archeological testing. Development in the area between the house site and the harbor should be avoided. New construction in and around the harbor should be minimized and should not adversely impact existing historic structures. All sight-lines between the major structures of the complex, including the main house site, pass over the harbor, so development around the harbor could greatly impact the integrity of the complex.

The next RMP update should include project statements for the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) and a subsequent Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for Boca Chita Key. The CLI, like the LCS, is a computerized evaluated inventory of all cultural landscapes having historical or cultural significance located within properties owned or managed by the NPS. Once the significant elements of the historic landscape have been identified and evaluated, restoration of the historic landscape may be recommended.

Interpretation of the site should focus on Honeywell and the wealthy industrialists with whom he associated, as well as on the work of August Geiger, an architect popular with Honeywell and his associates. The development of the key should also be referenced because the development of Boca Chita mirrored that of other keys in upper Biscayne Bay. The construction of the bulkhead and filling of the island as well as the later introduction of exotic plants illustrate on a small scale the changes wrought elsewhere in the bay on a much larger scale.

If the Park does not already maintain building files for historic structures, it should establish a building file system. Building files should contain information about the condition and maintenance history of each structure. Many LCS properties have been altered over the years, and the dates and nature of the alterations should be documented in the Park files. Section 106 documentation and maintenance records are important sources of information about alterations to historic structures. Park building files should contain at a minimum a copy of the LCS form, a black and white photographic print, and other pertinent information related to the history and maintenance of the property.

The architectural ruins on Boca Chita Key, as well as those on other keys, need to be included in the park's Archeological Overview and Assessment for their potential contribution to the historical record.